



# The road to the Expert Field Medical Badge 1AD hosts EFMB competition

Story and photos by  
Sgt. Gregory F. Withrow  
1st Armored Division PAO

BAUMHOLDER, Germany – The 1st Armored Division hosted soldiers from all over United States Army, Europe, during an Expert Field Medical Badge competition, Aug. 28 – Sept. 21.

The mountainous terrain and damp weather of the German state of Rhineland Pfalz set the training stage for competitors striving for the prestigious EFMB.

Soldiers attain the EFMB by passing a series of strenuous tests including a written exam of medical knowledge, a litter obstacle course, an evaluation of emergency medical treatment skills, a day and night land navigation course and a 12-mile timed road march.

“EFMB is a mark of professionalism. It sets people apart. If you are a medic or

soldier with an EFMB, or even an [Expert Infantry Badge], you know that a soldier can be counted on in a pinch,” explained Capt. Jonathan Ruwe, EFMB officer in charge. The EFMB is coveted by soldiers of all ranks of medical specialties.

“What EFMB means to me is a very high professional skill in the medical field,” explained Sgt. Joseph

*Joyfully grimacing and trudging the last few steps of a 12-mile road march through the mountainous terrain of Baumholder, Germany, an EFMB candidate raises his arms triumphantly, celebrating his achievement as he crosses the finish line.*

Villarreal, EFMB Survival Lane noncommissioned officer in charge and EFMB holder. The Survival Lane includes tasks which test soldiers’ abilities to perform correct radio procedures, assemble weapons, react under fire and evacuate casualties.

“Soldiers have to know all these skills to adapt them onto the battlefield whenever they need to. It’s great having the

EFMB, because people look to you, and they see you as a mentor since you have the EFMB. They want to learn from you, and here we’re trying to provide that for them,” said Villarreal, who is assigned to 1AD’s 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion, 6<sup>th</sup> Infantry Regiment, in Baumholder.

For competitors like Capt. Gregory T. Krievell of the Heidelberg Medical

Department Activity, every step of the road to earning the EFMB has been meaningful.

“So far, it’s been very good. It’s been very tiring, but I think I’m ready for the [12-mile road] march,” explained Krievell. “The most memorable experience for me was getting my two points on the night land navigation. That was [the] task I had the most concerns about.” *continued page 6*